

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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SUBJ: NAMSO CHAIRMANSHIP

REF: USNATO 1356 (DTG 101644Z MAR 77)

FURTHER TO REFERENCE MESSAGE, FOLLOWING PERSONAL RESPONSE FROM
UK MEMBER OF NAMSO BOARD IS QUOTED FOR WASHINGTON CONSIDERA-
TION IN ITS CURRENT REVIEW OF THIS MATTER.

BEGIN TEXT:

LET ME START BY SAYING THAT IN THE SHORT TIME I HAVE SERVED ON
THE NAMSO BOARD I HAVE COME TO SHARE THE HIGH REGARD IN WHICH
PHILIP BROWNING IS UNIVERSALLY HELD. I THINK THE ORGANIZATION
HAS BEEN FORTUNATE IN HAVING HAD A CHAIRMAN OF HIS OUTSTANDING
GIFTS OVER SO LONG A PERIOD. IT IS ALSO MY VIEW THAT THE ORGAN-
IZATION GAINS THROUGH HAVING ITS CHAIRMAN PERMANENTLY RESIDENT
IN LUXEMBOURG, AND THAT SOMETHING OF VALUE WOULD BE LOST IF
NAMSO REVERTED TO THE MORE USUAL ARRANGEMENT OF HAVING A NON-
RESIDENT CHAIRMAN WHO MERELY CAME TO LUXEMBOURG ON OCCASION,
EG TO CHAIR MEETINGS OF THE BOARD.

I THEREFORE HAVE A STRONG DISPOSTION TO GO ALONG WITH ANY
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REASONABLE ARRANGEMENT WHICH WILL ENSURE THAT NAMSO CONTINUES TO
HAVE A CHAIRMAN WHO IS NOT ONLY OF PHILIP BROWNING'S CALIBRE BUT
IS ALSO RESIDENT BETWEEN BOARD MEETINGS. MOREOVER, ALTHOUGH YOU
MUST NOT TAKE ME AS EXPRESSING A NATIONAL POSITION, MY OWN
PERSONAL VIEW IS THAT THERE IS ADVANTAGE IN HAVING A US
CANDIDATE IN THIS SEAT.

BUT HAVING SAID THIS, I AM AFRAID I SEE CONSIDERABLE DIFFICULTIES
IN THE SUGGESTION THAT THE CHAIRMAN OF THE NAMSO BOARD SHOULD
NOW BE FORMALLY DESIGNATED AS A NATO POST AND FUNDED COLLECTIVE-

LY. THE PRECEDENTS ARE AGAINST IT. AS I UNDERSTAND IT, THE COMMON ARRANGEMENT IN NATO ORGANIZATIONS IS TO COMPLEMENT AND FUND COLLECTIVELY, ONLY THE FUNCTIONAL POSTS (EG THE GENERAL MANAGER AND STAFF OF NAMSA) AND TO LEAVE IT TO NATIONS INDIVIDUALLY TO BEAR THE COSTS OF SENDING THEIR NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES TO WHATEVER BOARD OF MANAGEMENT THEY HAVE COLLECTIVELY AGREED TO SET UP FOR THE PURPOSES OF DETERMINING POLICY AND MONITORING PERFORMANCE. THE CHAIRMAN OF SUCH A BOARD IS, IN PRINCIPLE, SIMPLY THE PARTICULAR NATIONAL MEMBER WHO HAS BEEN CHOSEN BY HIS COLLEAGUES TO CHAIR THEIR DISCUSSIONS. I KNOW OF NO CASE IN WHICH THE COST OF THE CHAIRMANSHIP IS COLLECTIVELY FUNDED.

THE PROPOSITION YOU HAVE PUT TO ME ON THE NAMSO BOARD CHAIRMANSHIP WOULD THEREFORE BE A RADICAL DEPARTURE FROM ACCEPTED PRACTICE, AND I AM NOT AT ALL SURE WHAT THE OUTCOME WOULD BE OF PRESSING THE MATTER. I THINK IT COULD WELL RESULT IN A DECISION THAT TWO RESIDENT POSTS - CHAIRMAN AND GENERAL MANAGER - COULD NOT BE JUSTIFIED, AND, WHATEVER THE OUTCOME ON THIS POINT, THE QUESTION WOULD PROBABLY ARISE OF WHETHER THE CHAIRMANSHIP SHOULD ROTATE. AS I HAVE ALREADY SAID, I WOULD PERSONALLY REGRET EITHER OF THESE DEVELOPMENTS.

THUS, ALTHOUGH I RECOGNISE THE WISH OF YOUR GOVERNMENT TO REVIEW THE ARRANGEMENT WHICH HAS HITHERTO EXISTED, IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THERE IS A DISTINCT RISK OF DISTURBING THE PRESENT POSITION IF THEY CANNOT, ON REFLECTION, SEE THEIR WAY TO CONTINUING ON THE UNCLASSIFIED

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PRESENT BASIS.

IF, NEVERTHELESS, IT REMAINS YOUR GOVERNMENT'S VIEW THAT THEY SHOULD EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITIES OF A CHANGE, I THINK I MUST SAY, FIRST, THAT THIS DOES SEEM TO BE A MATTER WHICH THE BOARD MUST DISCUSS COLLECTIVELY AT ONE OF ITS FORTHCOMING MEETINGS AND, SECONDLY, THAT I CANNOT AT THIS STAGE COMMIT THE UK IN ADVANCE OF A BOARD DISCUSSION. MY OWN PERSONAL WISH WOULD BE TO SEE THE CHAIRMANSHIP CONTINUE, BOTH ON ITS PRESENT RESIDENT BASIS AND WITH AN INCUMBENT OF PHILIP BROWNING'S CALIBRE; BUT I AM AFRAID I HAVE NO AUTHORITY AT PRESENT TO COMMIT US TO A NEW ARRANGEMENT ON THE LINES YOUR PROPOSE.

IF, IN THE EVENT YOU DECIDE TO BRING THIS BEFORE THE BOARD IN SESSION, I THINK IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO KNOW RATHER MORE THAN I THINK WE DO AT PRESENT ABOUT HOW THE PRESENT ARRANGEMENTS CAME INTO EXISTENCE, AND WHAT UNDERSTANDINGS WERE REACHED AT THE TIME BETWEEN THE US AND NATO AUTHORITIES.

I AM SORRY NOT TO BE ABLE TO GIVE YOU A MORE HELPFUL REPLY. I DO ASSURE YOU, HOWEVER, THAT MY OWN APPROACH TO THE MATTER IS CONSTRUCTIVE, AND THAT I WOULD HOPE FOR A SATISFACTORY OUTCOME TO ANY BOARD DISCUSSION OF IT. I HAVE ALREADY INDICATED WHAT I WOULD WISH THAT OUTCOME TO BE. STRAUSS-HUPE

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